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SUBJECT CIA Backing/Guerrilla Bases

JESSICA SAVITCH: President Reagan will leave on Tuesday for a five-day tour of Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Honduras. The Administration hopes to improve relations with Latin America, and there have been extensive political preparations for this trip.

In Honduras, NBC News has learned that CIA-backed guerrilla bases have been moved out, moved to Nicaragua, where the target of the guerrillas, the leftist Sandinista government, is still in charge.

Fred Francis reports now from the State Department.

FRED FRANCIS: The Secretary of State, with the President's approval, has put a leash on CIA activities in Honduras. Mr. Shultz has been concerned in recent months that the CIA-financed guerrilla camps along the Honduran-Nicaraguan border would become an embarrassment to the Reagan Administration. There were ten such camps where anti-Nicaraguan insurgents received money, training, and arms to launch attacks against the Sandinista government. Now NBC News has learned those camps have all been moved across the Coco River into Nicaragua. The move not the start of an offensive against the Nicaraguan government, but rather a political maneuver to blunt criticism that Honduras is being used as a base to destabilize the Managua regime.

The decision to move the guerrilla camps was also made to shore up the Honduran civilian president, Roberto Suazo Cordova. Last week President Suazo Cordova promised the Sandinistas that Honduras would, quote, not lend its territory to the guerrilla movement.

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Surprisingly, the Honduran government announced this week that it had arrested two members of an anti-Sandinista group for plotting the overthrow of neighboring Nicaragua.

To put all this in perspective, one source said the Reagan Administration and the Honduran government are not changing strategy, just tactics.